

...there have been numerous press reports about Congressman Pence's experience at the Indiana State House of Representatives. *Channel 13 News (WTHR)* in Indianapolis [has a report on it](#)

that is an accurate representation:

The third highest ranking Republican in the US House of Representatives is an important voice in Washington, but Congressman Mike Pence's voice was silenced in the State House of Representatives.

It is almost a daily occurrence. Race car celebrities like Scott Dixon and various high school students from all across the state are regularly honored for their achievements on the floor of the House. Lawmakers certainly had time a few weeks ago to welcome Miss America. In fact, House Speaker Pat Bauer (D) had time to get a quick picture with Indiana's own Katie Stamm.

So imagine the surprise when Minority Leader Brian Bosma approached the speaker to ask permission to recognize Congressman Mike Pence Wednesday, and was denied.

If Congressman Pence had been given the opportunity to speak, his remarks would have gone something like this:

Mr. Speaker, Leader Bosma, and my fellow Hoosier public servants, I appreciate the opportunity to share just a couple of minutes with you about an issue of great concern to all Hoosier citizens. It is not a Republican issue. It is not a Democrat issue. It is an issue that crosses the partisan divide and unites many of us in our effort to protect Hoosier consumers and taxpayers.

Under the guise of protecting the environment, the so-called "cap and trade bill" will increase taxes on every American who uses any form of energy and would have a devastating impact on the Indiana economy and Hoosier taxpayers. It should be called a national energy tax. Washington politicians love it because they can claim that they are taxing polluters when in effect they are actually taxing middle class American families and workers.

[A recent article in The Wall Street Journal](#) pointed out the unjust burden this proposal would have on Indiana. The article states, "But the greatest inequities are geographic and would be imposed on the parts of the U.S. that rely most on manufacturing or fossil

fuels -- particularly coal, which generates most power in the Midwest, Southern and Plains states... Coal provides more than half of U.S. electricity, and 25 states get more than 50% of their electricity from conventional coal-fired generation." According to the Energy Information Administration, Indiana would be one of the hardest hit states in the nation because we get 94 percent of our energy from fossil fuels, particularly coal.

Friends and colleagues, we cannot allow the same Washington politicians who are already hitting us with high taxes and out of control spending to impose another mandate upon our citizens - a mandate which benefits the east and west coast, while slamming the Hoosier heartland.

While this plan may be well-intentioned, it clearly does more harm than good, specifically when it comes to our nation's small businesses who are struggling to keep their doors open during this economic recession.

In short, the "cap and trade" bill is a job killer. And those against it come from both political parties.

With small businesses and factories being forced to cut jobs or close their doors, more Americans will be out of work and unable to support their families. Those few businesses and factories that manage to stay open will only do so by passing their increased energy costs onto consumers.

President Obama himself admitted that the plan will cause energy prices to rise at the expense of the consumer. In an editorial board meeting with the San Francisco Chronicle during the presidential campaign he stated, "Under my plan of a cap and trade system electricity rates would necessarily skyrocket ... that will cost money. They will pass that money on to consumers..."

The effect of this massive tax increase will be felt by every American. According to cost analysis of similar cap-and-tax proposals, the total energy bill for the average American household will increase by up to \$3,128 per year. At a time when families across the heartland are hurting, the last thing they need is to be burdened with even more punishing taxes.

A study by the Heritage Foundation states that the U.S. GDP would shed at least \$155 billion in just a single year, and cumulative gross domestic product losses could be at least \$1.7 trillion after 2018. In this time of economic turmoil, Congress and the President should be promoting legislation that increases our economic growth, not stunts it. This plan sends our nation in the wrong direction, and it sends the wrong message to our world creditors.

Recently I was honored by being named Chairman of the Energy Solutions Working Group in the U.S. House. Next month we will be conducting hearings across the country, including Indianapolis. The purpose of the group is to study and propose ways that we can work together to increase American energy production, encourage greater efficiency

and conservation, and promote the use of alternative fuels. Together we can find common ground in our battle for energy independence without placing an additional burden on Hoosier consumers.

While we share concerns for our environment, a more productive option would be to encourage technological advancements that reduce pollution. We need to find common ground in promoting solutions that can work rather than punishing American families. Thrusting more taxes on Americans during a steep recession will only cause more economic hardship. Together, let us engage on behalf of Hoosier citizens in what amounts to an economic war on Indiana and this region.

Again, I want to thank my colleagues in the Indiana General Assembly, in both parties, for the service you and your families render to our state and nation every day. May God bless each of you as you continue to serve Him and this great state.